

**Monorail Review Panel
Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2003
SMP Community Room**

Panelists

Jack Mackie
Mimi Sheridan
Don Royse
Cary Moon
Vlad Oustimovitch
Nancy Henderson
Paul Tomita
Nic Rossouw
Steve Sheehy
Dan Foltz

City Staff

John Rahaim
Kathy A Dockins
Layne Cubell
Cheryl Sizov
Ethan Melone
Vince Lyons
Barb Wilson
Shelly Yapp
Don Loseff
Newell Aldrich
John Taylor
Barbara Goldstein
Lesley Bain

SMP Staff

Stephanie Stauffer
Rachel Ben-Shmuel
Joel Horn
Bob Derry
Jonathan Owl
Marjorie Shothheim
Suanne Pelley
Michele Jacobson
William P Bascus
Patricia Boies
Josh Stephenson

SMP Consultants

Vanessa Murdock
Alan Hart

Public

John Coney
Mahlon Clements
Karen Langrock
Jane Lewis
Rich Haag
Jim Kelley
R G Satterwaite

The meeting began with introductions all around: first the Panel and then the audience.

Panel Role, Composition, and Administrative Procedures

Because it is the first meeting of this Panel, John Rahaim distributed a draft outline of the Panel's Role, Composition, and Administrative Procedures. He clarified that the Design Commisison, with five members on the Panel, has authority and the Panel Chair will come from this group. Because the project is in the City right-of-way, it is under the Design Commission purview; however, because of its scope the Panel is being convened to act on the DC's behalf.

The Planning Commission and Design Review Boards are included to cover the broad range of issues associated with this project. They will have three and four members on the Panel, respectively, with the Design Review representatives coming from the following four Design Review Boards: West Seattle, Downtown, Queen Anne/Magnolia, and Northwest. John suggests that the next meeting be an Executive Session in which the Panel Chair is selected.

Also included in the outline are the Panel's purpose and goal. The purpose is stated thus, "To provide an efficient and coordinated planning and design review process that is integrated with the City's policy, planning, and permit review functions and that incorporated the City's principles and criteria for the project." The goal is stated thus, "To ensure the best fit with City policies, goals, and community objectives, and the creation of new City infrastructure that embodies design excellence.

The Panel shall meet twice a month, following the same pattern as the Design and Planning Commissions and the Design Review Boards. This meeting time (Monday 4 to 6 pm) may become the standard meeting time; however, some meetings may need to be longer in duration (especially earlier in the process). The meetings may be held here (SMP Community Room) or in the new City Hall Boards and Commissions room. The meetings will be open to the public and notices will be sent out to all on the Design Commission mailing list.

At this point John opened the floor to questions.

Is there any plan to have an artist representative on the Panel (from the Office of Art and Cultural Affairs)?

As yet OACA has not forwarded the names of any volunteers. Because of the reorganization, most of the Commissioners are new. However, it's still a possibility; we haven't ruled it out.

The Project Review Process, outlined in John's handout, follows the Design Commission's normal review process and is summarized here:

- Consultant Selection
- Pre-design, including planning and urban design issues
- Concept Design
- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Drawings as needed

In addition, the Design and Planning Commissions will be involved to varying degrees in the Environmental Impact Statement review and Station Area Planning. It will be beneficial for the Panel to see the process in stages. The schedule should be established two to three months in advance.

Why is there so much in pre-design? What's in the EIS? Do these categories make sense for this particular project?

I'll refer that to the SMP staff.

The two processes are distinct but concurrent, and the information can overlap. We need to establish a preferred alternative and create visual simulations of the preferred alternative as well as other alternatives. The design process is separate, focused solely on the preferred alternative. It's a calculated risk, as the station location may need to move as a result of the EIS, but this way we will learn what the community wants and we can apply it to the design of the preferred alternative.

So maybe these stages aren't right.

Maybe we can have a month-to-month decision of what's to be reviewed.

Can we cover issues up front while they're happening? I don't want to slow down the process but I don't want to miss anything either.

The pre-design phase is really important to this Panel. Initially we may need to meet more than twice per month.

We're trying to keep clear-minded while doing everything at once. EIS: prescribed manner; Design: specific design. We've got the attention of the community right now, so why not do it all at once?

The consultants and staff are working together to create a continuum from Station Area Planning to the station area to the station so it relates back to the context. We

have split the process into Elements of Distinction and Elements of Continuity throughout the alignment. Two of our six consultants are looking at system-wide opportunities. In addition to the consultants we've chosen, we are listening to information from City consultants.

So of the consultants on this list you've given the Panel, you have one each looking at the four main segments of the alignment and two looking at the overall continuity? Yes.

Alan proceeded to go over all consultants in the list:

Cascade Design Collaborative: Conceptual station site plans in West Seattle, Ballard, Interbay, and SODO

Hewitt Architects: Conceptual station site plans & streetscape concepts for Seattle Center to Pike Place Market

IBI Group: Translating design into easy-to-understand visual displays

Mithun: Developing system-wide urban design and landscape principles

NBBJ: Conceptual station site plans, streetscape studies, urban design and landscape principles for Seattle Center and Queen Anne

PLACE Architects: System-wide bicycle planning

Swift & Company: Developing system-wide urban design and landscape principles

Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership: Conceptual station site plans, streetscape studies, and urban design and landscape principles from Pike Place Market to Safeco Field

Discussion

- This feels like two projects – the EIS and the design of the preferred alternative. It reminds me of the Downtown bus tunnel. Westlake Station was pulled out of sequence in order to show the Fed and City of Seattle how an underground station would work and what it would look like. Engineering dealt with the tunnel while the design team moved to Westlake Station. The Design Commission reviewed Westlake almost as a stand-alone project. Later, when other issues were resolved, the results could be applied to the other stations. It may take a while, but we may need to do it so that the lessons learned can be applied to other stations along the route. *That's what we envisioned doing.*
- But the architects aren't actually building stations now.
- The design won't be that developed yet. Urban design issues will be dealt with in relation to each station as well as possible. *We're entering the urban design phase; drawings later down the line will show more. Urban design has as much to do with the guideway as it does with design. It's not just whether it's about brick and glass, but will there be retail or not, the feeling, the character, bike storage, kiss and ride . . . We've had over 3,000 responses to our questionnaire. Because this project is primarily in the right-of-way, we have no control over the streets and sidewalk. We have to collaborate with the City to develop guidelines.*
- Guidelines to the level of completeness? *That's our anticipation. We want to see it all to determine solutions . . . Which area will be whose responsibility. The station site is under our purview, the station area is under the City's purview. Working together we can determine solutions and overlay.*
- That's a good segue into discussion of the roles of the respective bodies (page 2 of handout); how to distinguish between the planning role of the MRP vs the planning role of the City.
- Has station area planning started?
- SAP is underway.
- And the City's is not?
- I heard that it is.
- They're happening concurrently.
- They'll inform each other. *We want to really separate the EIS; if some things inform design, that's good, but let's keep them separate and distinct packages.*
- This review body will do everything?
- No, the Planning Commission will have separate review.
- It will be like Light Rail('s review of the North Link segment): the full Planning Commission will review it before it gets to design and the Light Rail Review Panel.
- On the bus tour it looked like many of the stations are on private property. Is that property to be acquired? If so, how will that happen? How will it fit into our review process? There are really three entities here: SMP, the City and private property owners. *Our proposal for this transportation system is "associated development" which (unlike transit-oriented development) is specific to an opportunity. We will encourage and not hinder development, but it's not our purview and it's not mandated. This way the development is allowed to occur slightly after construction or concurrent with construction. The link into the station can be separate from the guideway so the development can happen anytime.*
- The Design Review Boards would also have to review private development at the stations (it's under their purview), which is one reason why we have DR representatives on this Panel. *The conceptual document is applied to the "real world." Out of that will come standards.*
- So you're trying to do "real world" prototypical design?

- I'd like some clarification of the Design Commission's role on the Panel (according to the chart John handed out). Secondly, are there regulatory changes necessary?
- Yes. I'll refer that question to Ethan.
- With transit, there are no pre-existing permitting conditions; we have to create them. The question is do we do code amendments? Do we do it via the Council-approved inter-governmental agreements? We're working on what the permitting provisions should be like. The general concepts are continuous, guideway, or the nineteen stations, with SDoT covering the guideway and DCLU covering the stations. It's a proposed design/build procurement; will that inform the provisions? Do we try to resolve as many issues as possible before design/build?
- This project should learn lessons from Sound Transit's experience with MLK Jr Way. Don't separate the guideway from the stations. The structure is a part of the corridor.
- SDoT has a particular attitude regarding transportation: We want Seattle to be a transportation city, and we must be a pedestrian city first.
- Sometimes will just SDoT be looking at the streetscape?
- SDoT is the permitting authority, but we intend to work with DCLU and be driven by an urban design perspective.
- What's the level of specificity with the guidelines? It's hard to pin down when they're not applied to a specific location.
- I'd like to further examine how the process could be more iterative.
- Please get us information on the permitting provisions as soon as it's available.
- Including where and when key decisions will be made.

Staffing Update

John then directed everyone to page three of the handout, covering Monorail staffing. Two will be hired to work with SDoT and five will be hired to work with DCLU. Currently, interviews are being scheduled.

Another issue up for discussion is getting the entire Panel up to speed on the project. The two Commissions have been working on this since 18 months before the vote. They have met with Monorail staff and written white papers.

Discussion

- I was unable to make the bus tour. Will there be another version? How do we get the DR representatives ramped up? Specifically, how can we look at other projects similar to this, short of flying to Australia?
- Let's think about that. We'll probably want to create notebooks. *We'll share information we have.*
- Imagery is important to me. For example, DC's subterranean train is very different from an elevated train.
- Vancouver BC has a good example. *We'll come up with two different examples for you to study.*
- Can we get documentation clarifying the City's responsibility and SMP's responsibility vis-à-vis right-of-way, guideway, and streetscape? *We're working on a presentation right now. There are a lot of details to work out. We should have something in the next six weeks or so (shows chart representing SMP schedule)*

Conceptual

EIS

Open Houses

Pre-design workshops/connectivity

Vision/Value workshops w/breakouts for each station

Urban Design process

working closely with teams for two to three months to develop criteria

Functionality/Prototypical Design

predetermine station function and test in the community

relation of elevator/stairs (vertical movement)

Impact on Community

materials, etc; will leave open right up to the end

Station design from July on

Consultant selection June and July

Design/Build

RFQs this week

RFP issued in fall '03

The draft EIS should be ready in August; feedback will be collected through fall. The final EIS should be complete by the end of the year (2003).

- *Could you send that schedule to us electronically with your meeting notes? And I received this schedule (like a flow chart) at our February 6 meeting. Is that still "real"? It's not quite done. What Alan just showed us is a newer version of the same thing. This new diagram doesn't distinguish individual roles yet. The public wanted an actual timeline, not the flow chart version that you have.*
- *We need to do a new iteration of what Jack has.*
- *Now I'd like to open it up to questions from the public . . . any questions?*
- *In the future, could you wear nametags, please?*
- *Yes, good idea. We'll get some made and have them in the future.*
- *Many Queen Anne and Seattle Center community groups have put a lot of time and effort into meeting and determining a preferred alternative through Seattle Center. Are you empowered to change the route and overturn our decision?*
- *Well, deciding a preferred alternative isn't our role.*
- *We're advisory only.*
- *The Monorail Review Panel may have its own ideas about an alternative.*
- *We may have our own ideas, but we'll look at the work you put into it also, and take into account what the public has said. We don't make the decision but if we feel a different alternative is better we would make that recommendation to City Council.*
- *So theoretically our preferred alternative could change?*
- *Yes.*
- *To what extent will the urban design teams influence how the RFP is written for design/build? SMP has established goals: our budget, our schedule, good design, transparency, and maintaining our grass-roots origin. The RFP won't be based solely on the lowest bid; it will be incorporated into a performance standard. The concept of a station clearly defined will go into the RFP.*
- *Are the stations part of the design/build process? Yes.*
- *The City was told they wouldn't be. I wasn't aware of that.*

MRP-SMP Procedures

The SMP has asked for some meetings to be less formal presentations to allow for informal discussion with the Panel. Do you all agree? (*General agreement*) We should also keep a record showing a summary of Panel discussion even if no actions are taken. Until the Monorail Review Panel Coordinator is hired, Layne and I will be the contacts for the Design Commission representatives; Cheryl Sizov and Marty Curry will be the contacts for the Planning Commission representatives; and Vince Lyons will be the contact for the Design Review Program representatives.

Planning and Urban Design Criteria

John asked us to get out our SDoT implementation program document to review its criteria.

- Ideally these criteria will be embraced by the City, community members, everyone. We've created a common set of principles; we want community input on this.
- I think the Panel should look this over between now and the next meeting. At the next meeting we should be ready to recommend adoption or amendment.
- We'd also like input from other groups: AIA Seattle, district councils, the Neighborhoods committee of City Council . . . we can prepare a summary of the feedback to augment the criteria. *You need to identify who is doing the integrating; that should be clarified.*
- Maybe in a column to the right?
- Or in a companion piece.
- Groupings? *Maybe like John did, divided into "support" and "lead."*
- Yes, we'll clarify it, but we need to come to a consensus on one set of principles. If something doesn't meet the criteria it may belong elsewhere.
- Yes, we might need agreement on some before we can know who does what.
- I think we should give everyone a copy of the guidelines from the Design Commission Handbook.
- We definitely need to make a packet for the newer people.
- We will prepare notebooks for the Panel.
- I think a list of principles that fits on one or two pages is a good idea.
- *What level of guideline do we need to apply to a 14-mile alignment? Could we have an overview since it goes through so many different neighborhoods?*
- There will be a greater degree of specificity from station to station. They'll be linked to the guidelines but will be more specific.
- How do you plan to accommodate the request for a full-scale mock-up (per the letter from Council President Steinbrueck and Councilmember Licata)? I ask that you do it accurately, measurably, and responsibly. Please don't do it half-measured. *We've gotten a quote for taking a 3-D model of Seattle Center and inserting the alignment. We can also do photo simulations like you see on screens/boards. Scaffolding wouldn't be as elegant as the columns will be. We don't want to get criticism for making a model that won't be as nice as the real thing, or be realistic.*
- A small section of a scale model will give a good representation. *We can't build it accurately.*
- I know set designers who say it can be done. You could stretch fabric to approximate the structure. *I'd love to talk to them.*
- I can give you their information. *Photo simulations will be good and accurate.*
- If you're planning to do a photo, why not do a video?

- Showing which trees have to go. *And which ones we'll be putting back in. We have a replant program.*
- But the experience won't be like going from one side to the other. *We couldn't have that done by Folklife.*
- Maybe by the Bite of Seattle? *Do you have any examples of video?*
- There's an Auto-Cad for McGaw Hall. *At the pedestrian level?*
- No; it's bird's eye. *Bird's-eye view is easy; that's why we're having trouble. We need pedestrian.*
- I know I've seen some stuff. I'll do some looking and see what I can find. *We can't combine reality and simulation at the pedestrian level.*
- "Can't do it" isn't going to cut it at this point. We need something, and I think the Panel is willing to work with you to get what we need.
- I suggest we make an action to support the intent of the Council letter.
- I realize Seattle Center is important; however, I don't want SMP to blow its entire budget on a simulation of 1/10th of a mile of a 14-mile alignment.
- Is Cary's proposal counter to that? I agree with Paul. I'd like to see simulation at the Smith Tower, too.
- I have three or four areas of concern. *We need to get a feel for the budget.*
- I'd like to clarify the letter. Council wants something physical. It doesn't have to be an exact representation, but they definitely want something approximating the size of the structure. *We can't do a full-scale mock-up. And fabric won't approximate the size. We'll be accused of trying to make it look too delicate.*
- Why are we all talking as if we're limited to one type of technique? Why couldn't we use a combination of techniques?
- I agree. You should use multiple tools in order to meet Council's intent. Multiple means of representation.
- I think there was some discussion of this before the vote.
- NBBJ discussed it.
- Marty & the PC talked about both a physical and a virtual (computer) representation. *Yes, but at the time we thought it would be a 22-foot structure, not a 60- or 70-foot structure.*
- It's important that people know what it's like to walk up to the column (and experience its mass). *It doesn't need to be 60' high. It will be the defining edge between the theater district, Republican Street, and the lawn. I'm not sure what we're gaining from the berm. Sonotube?*
- I'd like to add to what Cheryl had to say. We may not need to do all of this at one point in time. It could be iterative. What's clear is that Council has set the bar high and that SMP has to respond to that.
- I agree with Paul about the cost impact. It's not just Seattle Center that will be affected by this . . . what about the Ballard Bridge? Maybe virtual reality could be used for the entire line.
- I'm prepared to support Cary's motion; I also support what Cheryl said.

Action

The Monorail Review Panel concur with the intent of the April 29, 2003 City Council letter and offer our support to determine appropriate multiple technologies of representation to help laypeople imagine the effects of the Monorail through Seattle, such as (but not limited to): virtual reality, photo simulation, scaffolding, truncated columns, etc.

The action was approved unanimously.

John Coney requested that SMP also model the Mercer route to see the difference between it and the preferred alternative (of Queen Anne and Mercer community groups).

There are four upcoming workshops; at each, Ethan Melone will present the City's approach to Station Area Planning. We will send out information about that as well as the next MRP meeting, which will be an executive session.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10.